

**A SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PREPARING,
EXECUTING, AND SECURELY MANAGING
ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS**

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5 A system and a method for creating and controlling electronic
agreements. In general, the system includes a server and at least one client
interconnected through a communications medium. In operation, the system
only allows access to authorized users. Once a user gains access, the user
inputs commands and data that are necessary to create an electronic document.
10 Upon completion of the electronic document, the user can invoke a signature
process. During the signature process, the parties to the agreement enter
electronic signatures. The present invention operates to encrypt the electronic
document and then encrypts each of the signatures using an encryption key that
is based, at least in part, on the contents of the electronic document. This
15 aspect of the system prevents the creation of fraudulent versions of the
electronic document because any modifications to the electronic document will
invalidate the encrypted signatures. Finally, the system operates to transfer the
electronic agreement to a secure server. The server maintains the authoritative
copy of the electronic agreement, thereby providing control of the electronic
20 agreement.